

9. Common Secondary Windows

9.1 Dialog Windows

This section addresses some of the dialog windows for which Motif and MS Windows define common formats. If the application uses any of the window formats not addressed here, it does so in accordance with Motif and MS Windows design guidelines.¹

9.1.1 Properties Window

The application displays a Properties window, such as the one in figure 9-1, when users need to view or modify the properties of an object. If the window contains tabbed pages, each one contains the controls for setting a group of related properties for the object(s) in the current selection. For example, a Font Properties window might contain pages for setting font and alignment.

Motif Only: The window includes OK, Apply, Reset, Defaults, and Cancel push buttons and may include a Help button.

MS Windows Only: The window includes OK, Cancel, and Apply push buttons.

The Apply button is dimmed when the window opens (because there are no properties to apply) and becomes active after users change the settings on one of the pages. OK is the default action in a Properties window. When users close the window, they are requested to confirm the action if they have made changes that have not yet been saved. A Properties window can be modal or modeless.

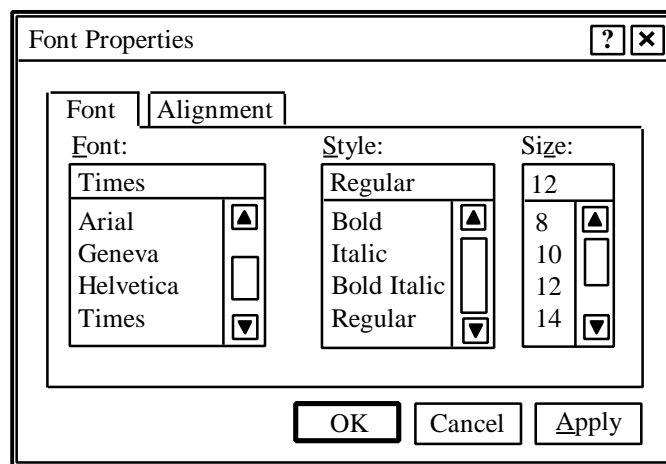


Figure 9-1. Example Properties window in MS Windows.

¹ The Color, Find, Font, Page Setup, and Replace windows available in MS Windows will be addressed in a future version of this document.

When a Properties window is displayed, the controls reflect the state of the selection. If the selection to which the window applies includes different types of objects, the controls reflect the state that is the intersection of the properties among the objects. When the selection is changed, the controls are updated to reflect the state of the revised selection. If tabbed pages are used in a Properties window, the push buttons can be placed either on individual pages or outside the pages on the window itself and behave as indicated in section 6.7.1.

9.1.2 Open and Save As Windows

The application displays an Open or Save As window when users need to choose a file or directory. An Open window, such as the one in figure 9-2, is displayed when users select Open from the File menu; a Save As window is displayed when users select Save As from the File menu or when they select Save from this menu and they have not yet named the file. The window contains controls for displaying and editing the current directory path, displaying directory and file names, and entering and editing a file name.

Motif Only: An Open window includes Open, Update, and Cancel push buttons. A Save As window includes Save, Update, and Cancel push buttons. Both windows may also include a Help button.

MS Windows Only: An Open window includes Open and Cancel push buttons. A Save As window includes Save and Cancel push buttons.

Open is the default action in an Open window; Save is the default action in a Save As window.

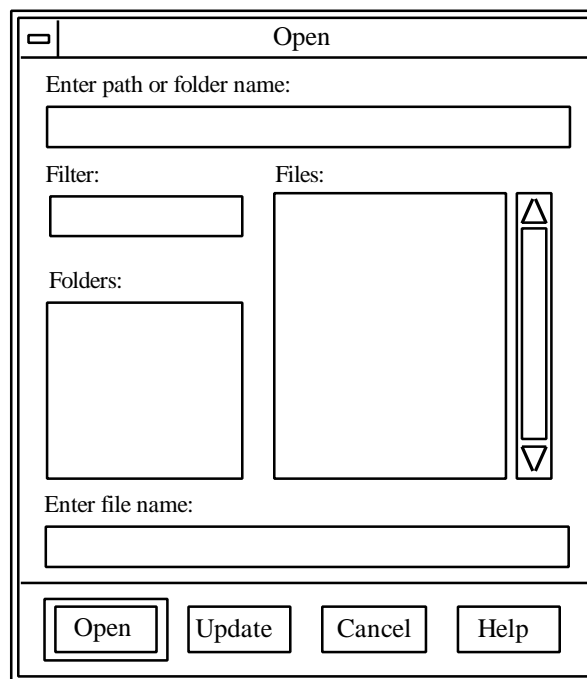


Figure 9-2. Example Open window in Motif.

When an Open or Save As window is displayed, it lists the current directory and its contents. Users can select a different directory and view its contents and enter or select a file name. Activating the Open push button closes the Open window and opens a window displaying the file that was selected. Activating the Save push button closes the Save As window and saves the file under the user-selected name. Users are prompted to confirm the action if it will overwrite an existing file.

9.1.3 Print Window

The application displays a Print window, such as the one in figure 9-3, when users need to print a file, a selection, or other type of object. A Print window is displayed when users select Print from the File menu.

Motif Only: The window contains a common area with controls for entering the name of the printer, the number of copies, and the text to appear on the banner page, if any. The window can also include an optional area for displaying information specific to the application or function. The window contains Print and Cancel push buttons and may include a Help push button if help support is available in the window. If Reset and Print Preview actions are included in the button group, they are placed between Print and Cancel. Print is the default action in the window.

MS Windows Only: The window contains controls for entering the name of the printer, the print range, and the number of copies. The window includes OK and Cancel push buttons. OK is the default action in the window.

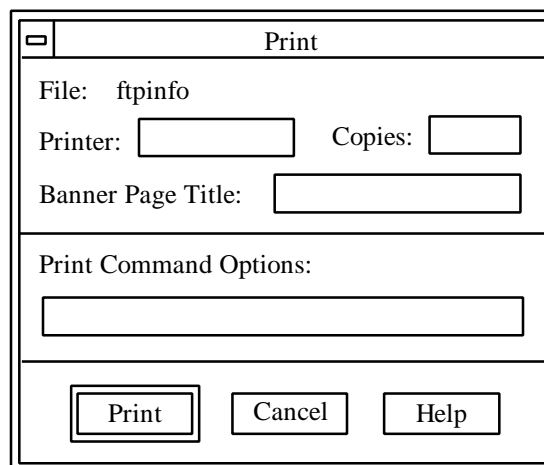


Figure 9-3. Example Print window in Motif.

9.1.4 Prompt Window

The application displays a Prompt window, such as the one in figure 9-4, to request information it needs to continue processing. The window includes a label identifying the information needed, a text box for users to enter it, and OK and Cancel push buttons. The window may also include Apply, Reset, and Help push buttons.

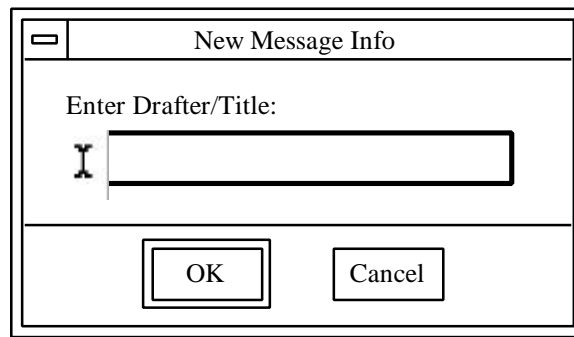


Figure 9-4. Example Prompt window in Motif.

9.1.5 List-to-List Transfer Window

The application displays a List-to-List Transfer window, such as the one in figure 9-5, when users need to move objects from one collection to another. The window contains list boxes that display the contents of each collection, and push buttons for transferring items between the collections. The window can include other controls that allow users to modify the contents of the source list (e.g., to limit the items in the source list to those with specific features). The action area contains OK and Cancel push buttons and may include a Help button.

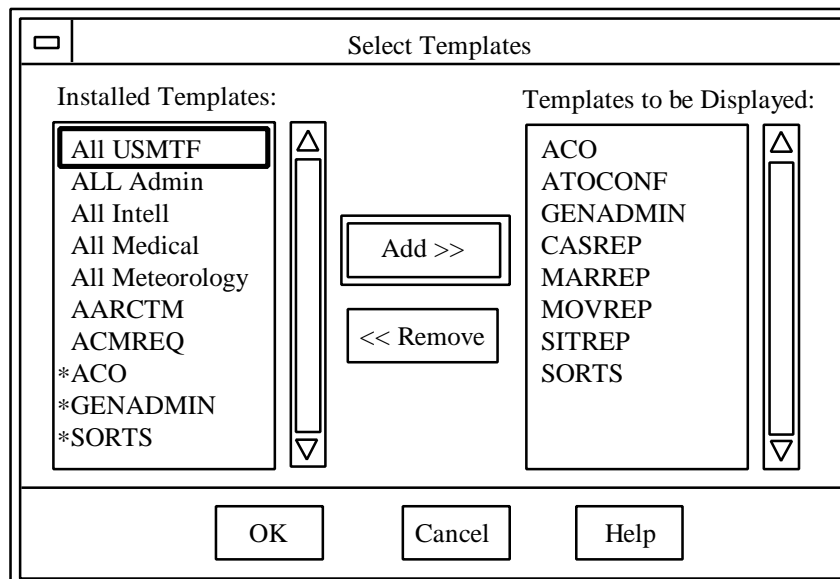


Figure 9-5. Example List-to-List Transfer window in Motif.

Depending on the nature of the transfer task, an item in the source list can be either copied or moved when users transfer it to the destination list. In the former case, the item is marked (e.g., with an asterisk) to indicate that it has been transferred; the mark is removed when users transfer the item back to the source list.

9.1.6 Selection Window (Motif Only)

The application displays a Selection window, such as the one in figure 9-6, when users need to make a selection from a list of choices or perform an incremental search (see section 6.9.2.2). The window includes a list box with the choices available and a text box for displaying and editing the choice. The window contains OK and Cancel push buttons and may include Apply and Help push buttons.

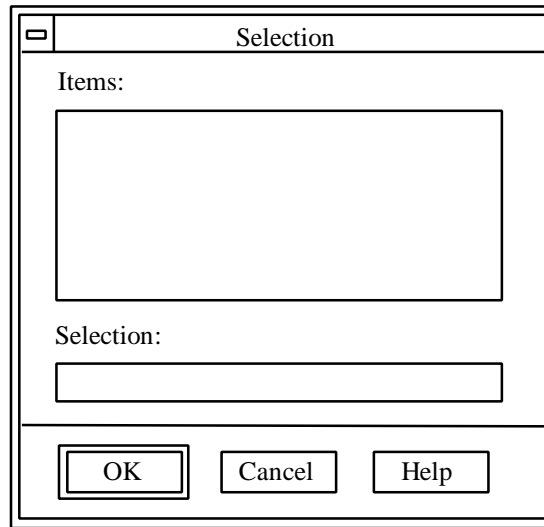


Figure 9-6. Example Selection window in Motif.

Users can select an item from the list box or type in the text box. If the text does not match any items in the list, users are informed of the mismatch. If appropriate, users can be prompted to add the item to the list. Activating the OK button or pressing RETURN executes the selection and closes the window.

9.1.7 Command Window (Motif Only)

The application displays a Command window, such as the one in figure 9-7, when users need to type commands. The window contains a list box that displays a command history and a text box for entering commands. Users can select an item from the list box or type in the text box. RETURN executes the command and adds it to the bottom of the command history list. If the command fails, it is not transferred to the list, and the application provides feedback to the user (e.g., an Error window, an auditory signal).

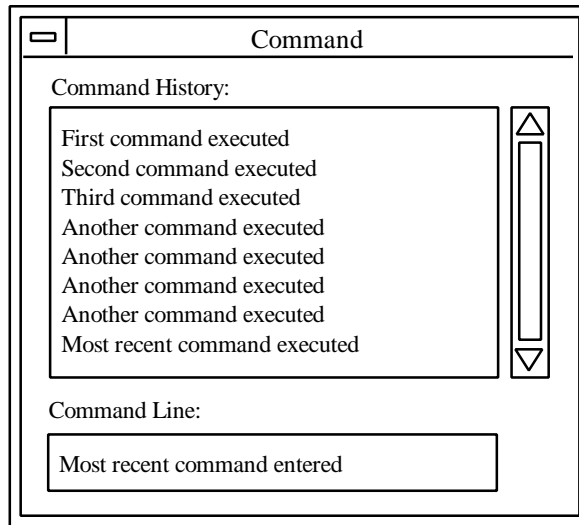


Figure 9-7. Example Command window in Motif.

9.2 Message Windows

Motif and MS Windows define different formats for common message windows. Each of the formats is described in this section.

9.2.1 Error Window (Motif Only)

The application displays an Error window, such as the one in figure 9-8, to inform users when an error has occurred. The window contains the error symbol and a text message describing the error, why it happened, and what should be done to correct it. The window contains OK and Cancel push buttons and may include Retry (if users can launch a process again) and Help buttons.

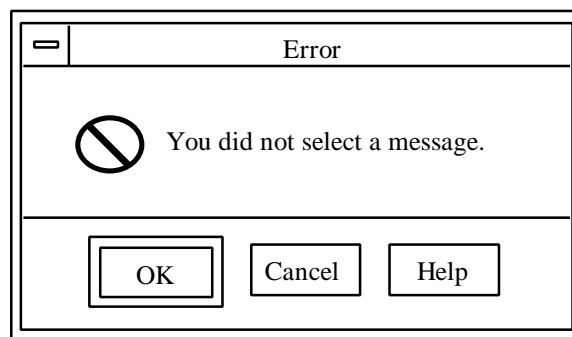


Figure 9-8. Example Error window in Motif.

9.2.2 Information Window (Motif Only)

The application displays an Information window, such as the one in figure 9-9, to convey noncritical information that requires acknowledgment by users. The window contains the

information symbol and a text message. The window contains an OK push button and may include a Help button.

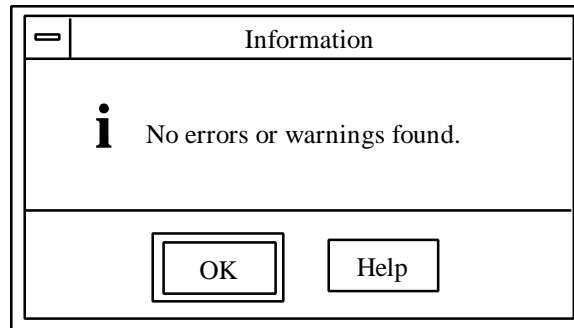


Figure 9-9. Example Information window in Motif.

9.2.3 Question Window (Motif Only)

The application displays a Question window, such as the one in figure 9-10, to request clarification of a previous response. The window contains the question symbol and a text message. The window includes Yes and No push buttons or ones that describe the action performed when the button is selected. For example, if the message is “Save changes before exiting?,” the push buttons can be Save and Discard. The window may also include Cancel and Help buttons.

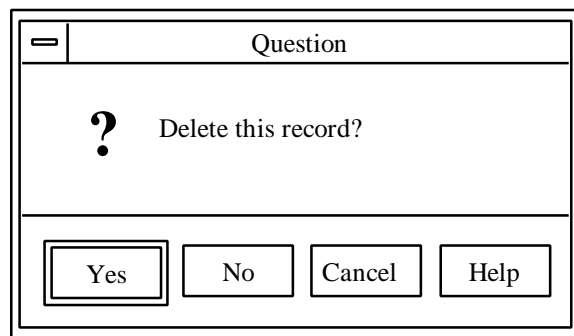


Figure 9-10. Example Question window in Motif.

9.2.4 Warning Window (Motif Only)

The application displays a Warning window, such as the one in figure 9-11, to present critical messages concerning the consequences of an action and to allow users to cancel a destructive action. The window contains the warning symbol and a text message. The window can include Yes and No buttons, Continue and Cancel buttons, or ones that describe the action performed when the button is selected, and may include a Help button. The default is the least destructive action in the window (e.g., Cancel in figure 9-11).

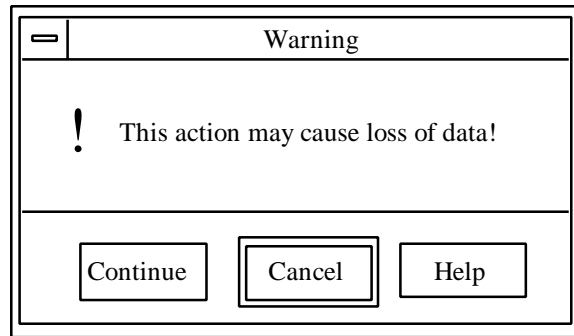


Figure 9-11. Example Warning window in Motif.

9.2.5 Working Message Window (Motif Only)

The application displays a Working window, such as the one in figure 9-12, when the processing time in response to a user's request exceeds 10 sec. or when the user may want to cancel the operation that is in progress. The window contains the working symbol and a text message or a gauge that is updated to indicate the state of processing. The window contains an OK push button and may include a Help button and Cancel, Stop, Pause, and Resume buttons if the processing can be controlled by users.

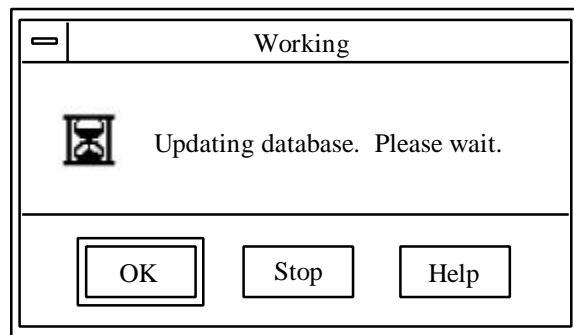


Figure 9-12. Example working message window in Motif.

The window remains displayed until processing is complete, the window doing the processing is minimized, or the user cancels the process. When processing is complete, the window is dismissed (without user action). If users cancel the process, they have to confirm the action before it is executed if unsaved data will be lost.

9.2.6 Information Window (MS Windows Only)

The application displays an Information window, such as the one in figure 9-13, to provide information about the results of commands. The window contains the information symbol, a text message, and an OK push button. If the window presents status information, it can include a gauge that is updated to indicate the state of processing and a Stop push button.

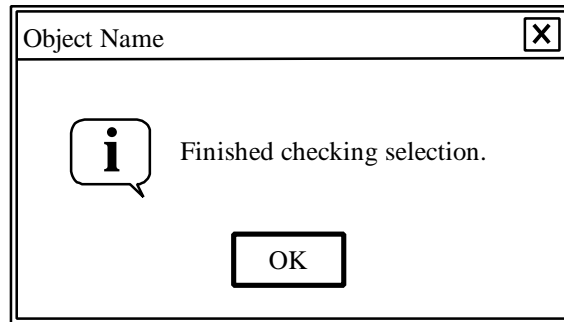


Figure 9-13. Example Information window in MS Windows.

9.2.7 Warning Window (MS Windows Only)

The application displays a Warning window, such as the one in figure 9-14, to present messages concerning the consequences of an action and to allow users to cancel a destructive action. The window contains the warning symbol, a text message, and one or more push buttons. If the message text is worded as a question, the window includes Yes, No, and Cancel push buttons. The default is the least destructive action in the window.

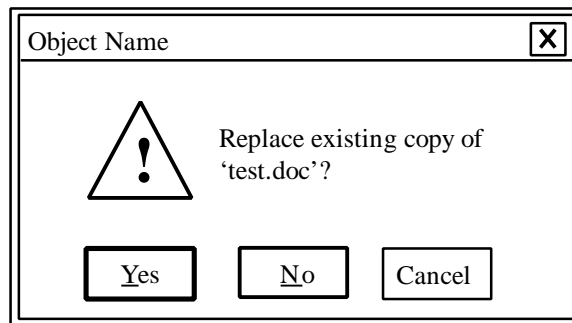


Figure 9-14. Example Warning window in MS Windows.

9.2.8 Critical Window (MS Windows Only)

The application displays a Critical window, such as the one in figure 9-15, to present messages about critical problems that must be corrected before processing can continue. The window contains the critical symbol, a text message describing the problem, and one or more push buttons.

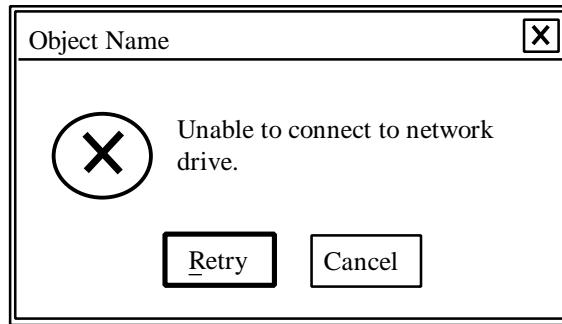


Figure 9-15. Example Critical window in MS Windows.